DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 354 626 EA 024 700

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TITLE Washington State Administrative Certification and Cultural Diversity Requirements. Draft.
PUB DATE Oct 92
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration (Minneapolis, MN, October 30-November 1, 1992).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Education; *Certification; *Cultural Differences; Disabilities; *Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnic Groups; Gifted; Higher Education; *Minority Groups
IDENTIFIERS *Diversity (Students); *Washington; Washington Administrative Code

ABSTRACT

Most of the school districts in Washington State are small, rural, and contain a low percentage of minorities. However, the Hispanic student population has increased from 3.9 percent in 1985-86 to 6 percent in 1991-92, mostly due to migrant students. The percentage of other minority students has remained relatively stable. Consequently, there is increased pressure to improve cultural diversity awareness in administrative preparation programs. State regulations covering teacher and administrator licensure rules outline "general knowledge" or "general skills" requirements concerning cultural diversity awareness. However, the regulations do not require cultural diversity issues to be included in the course content of administrator preparation programs. A survey of the chief administrators at the five approved administrator preparation programs in the state found that the programs are meeting diversity requirements in four ways: recruitment of students with diverse backgrounds, diversity-oriented courses, inclusion of diversity "units" into other courses, and internship activities. However, a content analysis of internship plans designed by administrative students at one university found most of the plans failed to meet the specific requirements or spirit of state regulations on diversity in administrator preparation. Additional regulations may be needed in curriculum and program structure to correct this problem. (JPT)

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Washington State Administrative Certification and Cultural Diversity Requirements

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Paper presented at the UCEA Convention
Minneapolis, Minnesota
October 31, 1992

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Washington State Administrative Certification and Cultural Diversity Requirements

Introduction

This paper will provide a descriptive overview of administrative licensure practices in Washington State in regard to cultural diversity issues. In the following paragraphs, we discuss the Washington state context in terms of demographics of the school population, summarize the administrative licensure rules related to cultural diversity competencies, and describe the ways in which university licensure programs address diversity issues in practice.

Washington State Context

With the exception of the Puget Sound area, Washington State is sparsely populated and based in an agricultural economy. The state's population demographics reflect its history of settlement by farmers of European descent and most of its school districts are classified as small and rural; of 298 school districts, only 93 (31%) enroll 2,000 or more students and only 61 districts (20%) serve a student population that is at least 20% minority. Thus, historically, across most of the state, school administrators have worked with fairly homogeneous non-minority student groups and have been concerned with issues common to "small schools."

On the other hand, Washington state receives more migrant agricultural workers on an annual basis than any other state in the nation. Each year, 40,000 identified migrant students enter Washington public schools. Ninety percent of this migrant school population is Hispanic. Because more migrant workers have "settled out" in recent years, primarily in the agricultural areas of the central basin, the overall percentage of Hispanic students in Washington public schools has increased from 3.9% in 1985-86 to 6.0% in 1991-92, while the percentages of Afro-American, Asian and Native American students have remained relatively stable. With this recent shift in the demographics of the student population and in line with national trends, state policy makers, practitioners in the field and university education faculty concerned with administrator preparation have become more aware of diversity issues and of the need for training programs to develop cultural diversity competencies in their candidates.

Administrative Licensure Requirements Related to Diversity

The Washington state legislature has delegated the authority to set standards for teacher and administrator licensure to the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). Rules adopted by these agencies are embodied in the Washington Administrative Code (WACs).

Three types of administrator certificates are issued in Washington state: Superintendent, Principal, and Program Administrator. However, only the building principal and assistant principal positions require a certificate. Although the Superintendent and Program Administrator credentials are desirable and preferred, an individual may legally serve as school superintendent or program director without holding an administrative certificate.

State regulations (WACs) govern the content of administrator preparation programs in two ways; some specify the "general knowledge" required for licensure (typically addressed in course content) and some specify the "general skills" to be demonstrated by candidates (typically addressed in internship experiences). An additional section of the WACs enhances some of these requirements by articulating evaluation standards for preparation programs. We analyzed each of these WAC sections for content related to diversity issues.

WACs Pertaining to "General Knowledge"

WAC 180-79-131 stipulates the "general knowledge required of all candidates for certification" (both teachers and administrators). Included here under the rubric "Schools and Society" is the item

> **Public policy issues related to the role of schools in a democratic society, with particular emphasis on (1) Equity issues related to various populations--e.g. race, sex, handicapping conditions, gifted, migrant, poverty, aliens, etc.**

In addition, under the general category "Human Growth, Development, and Learning" are the following two knowledge requirements:

> **(a) Physical, psychomotor, cognitive, social, and emotional development of the normal and exceptional child, including those with handicapping conditions and the highly capable from birth to age twenty-one; and (c) Educational processes appropriate to normal and exceptional children, including those with handicapping conditions and the highly capable form birth through age twenty-one..."**

In practice, because these topics are required for teacher certification as well, it is assumed that candidates for administrative certificates have "covered" these topics in their previous educational backgrounds through such courses as "social foundations" and "educational psychology," and these areas are not generally required in administrator certification coursework.

In contrast, WAC 180-79-140 stipulates the "general knowledge" which is specific to administrator certificate candidates. Broad categories included here are "School Organization and Management," "Program Administration," and "Washington State School Law." These requirements drive much of the coursework content for administrator preparation programs in the state, stipulating such traditional areas of study as personnel, finance, community relations, organizational theory, law, etc. Here diversity issues are addressed only peripherally under "School Law": Candidates must have knowledge of

> **Provisions of Washington state law, including applicable rules and regulations, affecting the operation of public schools, including:...(vi) Equity and nondiscrimination. (vii) Education of the handicapped.**

In practice, it is assumed that this requirement will be met in "school law" course(s).

In summary, Washington state rules which drive the course content of administrator preparation programs do not explicitly require that cultural diversity issues be addressed and do not provide, in terms of accountability, strong incentives to develop appropriate coursework in this area.

WACs Pertaining to "General Skills"

WACs 180-78-210 and 180-78-245 pertain to "general skills" to be demonstrated by candidates in their field experiences (internships). In addition, each credential (superintendent, principal and program administrator) has specialized "specific skills" to be demonstrated (WACs 180-78-260, 180-78-255 and 180-78-250 respectively). Only under the "general skills" rubric are diversity issues addressed. WAC 180-78-210 requires work with "diverse populations":

> **Candidates must demonstrate their ability to work effectively with students of various backgrounds, including: (a) Students with exceptional needs, including those with handicapping conditions and the highly capable. (b) Students from racial and/or ethnic populations other than the candidate's.**

This requirement is enhanced by the WAC section dealing with evaluation of preparation programs. Specifically, WAC 180-78-170 stipulates "evidence" to be used to determine if a preparation program's internship component is in compliance with the WACs. This evidence includes:

> **Candidates participate in structured experiences with ethnic, racial, and cultural populations (sic) and with special education and highly capable students. Such experiences provide opportunities for candidates to understand the unique contributions, similarities, difference, interdependencies, and special needs of students with particular emphasis on those varying racial, cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds.**

Clearly, this latter compliance standard is intended to add teeth to the internship requirement stated above and to shift the emphasis to cultural diversity over special education. In practice, candidates and their internship supervisors translate these requirements into a wide variety of specific activities intended to at least "satisfice" the WACs.

How Programs Address Diversity

To examine the ways in which administrator preparation programs in Washington sate are addressing diversity issues in practice, we gathered data in two ways. First, we contacted by telephone the chief administrator (e.g. department chair, area coordinator) of each approved administrator preparation program at public institutions in the state and asked the open-ended question, "How is your program addressing diversity issues?" Second, we conducted a content analysis of internship plans filed by a cohort of administration students at one of the state's larger public institutions.

Responses by Program Heads

Five public institutions in Washington state offer administrator preparation programs approved by the state. Two institutions are major research universities offering doctoral level study in educational administration, while three are smaller regional universities offering master's level study. Responses of program heads to our open-ended questions indicated that programs are addressing diversity issues in four basic ways: (a) through recruitment of students of diverse backgrounds into the program, (b) through offering specific courses that address diversity issues, (c) through integration of specific "units" into courses, and (d) through internship activities.

The extent to which the programs address diversity issues varies widely. All five of the institutions indicate that internship activities are an important avenue for addressing diversity, as would be expected in light of the state's explicit requirements delineated above. Two of the institutions rely solely on this method, while the other three use a combination of internships, student recruitment, specific courses and course units. The apparent level of commitment to addressing diversity issues varies with the geographic location of the institution, with programs located in more urban areas indicating a stronger commitment. Two examples will illustrate the contrast between programs.

Program A is located at a major university in an urban area. This program offer the doctorate and master's degrees in administration, along with superintendent and principal certification. According to the program chair, student recruitment of persons of diverse backgrounds is a priority, resulting in a student group that includes 20% persons of color. Program content and structure address diversity issues in several ways. First, the faculty is in the process of building a "multicultural curriculum," including a specific course in administration of multicultural school settings. Second, students participate in weekly seminars to administrative issues, including diversity. And, third, one of the three internship experiences required by the program must be at a multicultural urban site.

In contrast, Program E is located at a small regional university in a rural, agricultural area. This program offers the master's degree and principal certification only. The internship is the major avenue in this program for addressing diversity issues. According to the program chair, if the student population at the primary internship site is not at least 10% minority, then the intern is required to "get additional experience" in a building that meets the 10% criterion. Within this program, according to the chair, diversity issues are also integrated into the program's course offerings.

The following table summarizes the methods used to address diversity issues across the five administrator preparation programs at public institutions in Washington state.

Institution	Recruitment of Students of Diverse Backgrounds	Specific Courses Developed	Units Integrated into Traditional Administration Courses	Internship Experiences
Program A	XX	XX		XX
Program B	XX		XX	XX
Program C	XX	XX		XX
Program D				XX
Program E				XX

In summary, the minimal WAC requirements for addressing diversity issues are met by each program through internship activities, with some programs choosing to exceed this minimum level. Clearly, the WACs have some prescriptive power for determining how programs address issues in school administration.

Content Analysis of Internship Activities

To examine the nature of the involvement that educational administration students were having with diverse populations as part of their field experience we conducted a content analysis of the internship plans filed in September of 1992 by a cohort of administration certification students at one of the state's larger public institutions. This

university had 49 students enrolled in internships during this period, each of whom was asked to submit their formal internship plan for review by the research team. 34 complied with this request. Table #2 reflects the submitted plans in comparison to the total enrolled cohort at this University.

Table #2
Intern Plans Reviewed

Total	# in Sup't Program	# in Prin Program	# Prog Adm
In Sample	15	28	6
Reviewed	12	19	2

(note: that one intern failed to identify the program enrolled in)

Although the "field experience" plans examined were generally approved as complete[1] in many cases the plans reflected a failure on the students part to meet both the letter and intent of WAC180-78-210 and a failure on the institution's part to fully comply with WAC 180-78-170. For example, each student was supposed to "Demonstrate the ability to work effectively" with handicapped students, highly capable students, and students who are racially different from themselves, and the University was to ensure that their "candidates participate in structured experiences with ethnic, racial, and cultural populations and with special education and highly capable students." Yet, when we initially coded intern activities to identify whether specific planned activities related to work with special education students, gifted students or students from diverse ethnic groups we discovered that many interns had, in fact, failed to plan activities for each one of the three categories. It is important to note here that when we coded activities we were quite liberal in assigning a proposed experience to one of the categories (special education, gifted or minority/cultural). If it even tangentially related to that area it was coded as belonging in the category. Furthermore, at this initial stage we chose not to reject activities which, while relevant, did not involve "the ability to work effectively with students." For example activities such as the following were accepted as fitting into the category of gifted.:

> "Serve on the _____ High School 'Highly Capable Committee' and determine funding and program for students who have been identified as highly capable." (Sup't #2)
>
> Represent _____ Junior High School at the Accelerated Mathematics Program Orientation on September 15, 1992" (Principal #13)
>
> "Work with area elementary principals in developing a program for gifted students." (Principal #16)

Likewise, we listed the following type of activities as fitting into the category of handicapped:

> "Coordinate and monitor integrated chapter/special education program into first and second grades." (Superintendent #3)

[1]Since these plans were collected six weeks into the internship they were deemed to be accepted and operational.

"Work with our special program teachers and complete a staffing for a special needs student." (Principal #14)

"Work closely with the Southwestern Washington Special Olympics Association to provide ongoing activities for district special education students who qualify for special Olympics." (Program Administrator #18)

Similarly, we classified the following type of statements as pertaining to work with ethnically diverse students:

"Discuss with staff members and students cultural sensitivity issues." (Principal #12)

"Monitor minority student attendance and academic progress, compare data to the non-ethnic school population and report findings to the administration at the end of the school term." (Principal #13)

"Be actively involved with the development and implementation of a comprehensive multi-cultural awareness training program for the district." (Superintendent #23)

Table #3 reflects our placement of the codable responses (all activities were coded, however, only one activity per intern was counted [per category] in table #3).

Table #3
Distribution of Activities

		Princ (N=19)		Supts (N=12)		Prog Admin (N=2)		Total (N=33)		
		#	%	#	%	#	%		#	%
Gifted	7	37	8	67	1	50		16	48	
Handicapped	12	63	9	75	1	50		22	67	
Minority/Ethnic		17	89	8	67	1	50		26	79

The wording of WAC 180-78-210 and WAC 180-78-170 makes it clear that the intent of these regulations was to have each administrative candidate "participate in structured experiences" with each of the three specified categories of student diversity. Clearly, that intent was not being realized by a significant percentage of this sample. For example, 21% of these intern plans neglected to have an activity that related to minority/ethnic students, while a third of them failed to include activities pertaining to handicapped students, and over half totally omitted any mention of activities involving the "highly capable."

A second analysis was conducted of all the codable activities to see which ones clearly involved the candidate in "structured experiences" which would enhance their "ability to work effectively with students" as specified in the regulations. Tables #4-6 reflect the number of intern goals that actually specified "contact" with parents[2] or students. Once again, the coding was done liberally. Any item which related to processes which

[2]Although the regulation referred specifically to students we considered work with parents might also constitute experience with a particular population.

might generally involve prolonged student and/or parent contact were included. For example, the following type of items were coded as involving *student contact*:

> "Assess needs of an extremely bright extended studies student, communicate with the parents, arrange program modifications, involve middle school principal, high school assistant principal, extended studies teacher, assistant superintendent in long range planning." (Superintendent #3)
>
> "Attend all IEP meetings for one targeted blind student. Monitor classroom needs and all special supplies needed to monitor the targeted students needs." (Principal #31)
>
> "Develop an action plan with the local Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe to improve Indian student attendance at School." (Superintendent #26)

Only items which failed to mention either student or parent contact and involved work generally associated with the professional staff, grant writing, and/or program design were coded as non-student contact.

Table #4
Student Contact-Work With Handicapped Students

	Superintendent N=12		Principal N=19		Program Admin N=2	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	0	0	4	21	0	0
No/ Uncodable	12	100	15	79	2	100

Table #5
Student Contact-Work With Highly Capable

	Superintendent N=12		Principal N=19		Program Admin N=2	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	2	17	1	5	0	0
No/ uncodable	10	83	18	95	2	100

Table #6
Student Contact-Work with Minority/Ethnic Students

	Superintendent N=12		Principal N=19		Program Admin N=2	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	2	17	8	42	0	0
No/ uncodable	10	83	11	58	2	100

These data raise some important questions about the potency of WACs 180-78-210 and 180-78-170 in fostering governmental intent. If it is desired that administrative candidates gain experience through work with students from each of the identified categories, then that goal is not being realized by many in the sample of educational administration interns we examined. If it was expected that the University ensure "participation in structured experiences with ethnic, racial and cultural populations and with special education and highly capable students" then this particular University was not complying with these obligations. It was the opinion of several faculty working at the subject University (who had supervised interns for several years) that this sample of "field experience" plans were not untypical of what has been considered acceptable in past years. While it is beyond the scope of our data to conclude that this pattern would be observed at the other four certification granting institutions, there is also no reason to suspect that the field experiences of these educational administration students at the subject University would be any different then that which would be found at the other public institutions.

Summary Comments

To determine the efficacy of this regulatory approach to cultural sensitivity we must return to the purpose of these regulations. When the activity list from a sample of interns was analyzed it appeared that many students had no plans to initiate new activities involving work with *diverse* student populations. Rather these administration student's were often simply pledging to continue with the type of ongoing work that was typical of incumbents in their present positions. For example, teachers (who were preparing for principalships) declared their intentions to work with the diverse populations currently present in their classes, e.g., *"I have taught ESL and will continue to monitor and provide support to ESL students and families in this building."* (principal candidate #9) Likewise, those Principals (who were pursuing Superintendent certification) mentioned continuing with the monitoring and oversight that they were already charged with as building level supervisors, e.g., *"I will continue to develop programs for the highly capable. We have provided an additional foreign language, advanced placement physics, an additional year of biology and a fifth year of mathematics. I have instituted a program where students can earn an academic letter that reflects a considerably higher degree of work and quality."* (superintendent candidate #19)

It was very rare for us to find an individual who was reaching out for new experiences with diverse populations. Specifically few were planning on engaging in activities that would be expected of administrators holding the position they were training for. If the purpose of these regulations was simply to encourage familiarity with some diverse students, then this selection of activities might be satisfactory to advance that limited purpose. If, however, the policy goal was to require opportunities for administrative candidates to explore the types of interactions that a qualified incumbent (in the position they were being prepared for) would be expected to engage in with handicapped, gifted, and minority students, than the cohort we examined will find their field experiences falling far short of meeting that goal.

Finally, if the goal of Washington's regulatory approach to enhancing administrative skill with diverse populations was to guaranty equal attention to this important issue across the five certification granting institutions, that goal was not being achieved. Our data suggested that only 2 of 5 institutions were aggressively moving forward with plans that ensure meaningful involvement with diversity issues by administration candidates. If hightened sensitivity to the needs and characteristics of diverse populations (beyond that which can be achieved through a minimal field experience) is desirable, then additional regulations may need to be considered in the areas

of curriculum and program structure. Such requirements would likely force more emphasis from the 3 minimally involved institutions.

Ultimately, however, the problem in Washington may be more ethical then legal. The question may be what will it take to get the faculties at colleges of education which are largely serving majority culture students who are planning on working in majority culture dominant schools, to believe that issues of diversity are truly a priority? The solutions may lie as much in faculty hiring, training , and program development as it will in regulations that often receive, at best, minimal attention.